

## **Town of Lake Santeetlah**

### **Council Meeting Minutes**

**January 19, 2016**

Mayor Crabtree called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Vice Mayor Jim Hager and Councilmembers Bob Wehr, John Garland and Connie Gross were present for the meeting. Town Administrator Kim Matheson and Clerk Emily Hooper were present for the meeting. Public Works Technician Eric Hayes was not available.

The first order of business was the approval of the agenda. Mayor Crabtree asked to add an item of discussion to the agenda. An easement granted in the past to Jose Rosado by the Town in regards to a right of way through Town Hall parking lot will be Discussion Item #5. Vice Mayor Jim Hager made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Bob Wehr seconded. All others approved, the motion carried.

After a review of the December 15, 2015, Council Meeting minutes no changes or corrections were needed. Jim Hager made a motion of approval, and Bob Wehr seconded. All others agreed. The motion carried.

**Financial Report:** Town Administrator Kim Matheson shared a brief overview of the reports presented. The funds in the general account have increased in the past month due to recent tax collections. Kim Matheson and Finance Officer Jim Hager will begin working on the budget preparation for the upcoming year within the next week, and with that the reports can be adjusted to confirm accuracy if needed. At that point the new reports can be posted to the website and will be available for review at Town Hall upon request.

#### **Request for Public Comment:**

Aura Griffith asked that all “major issues” be postponed for discussion until more residents of the Town were present. Griffith referred to the possible zoning changes as one of the issues she is concerned about. Mayor Crabtree assured Aura that the intentions of the Council were to wait until spring to further discuss these issues.

Jack Gross pointed out that paying off the loan from United Community Bank was a positive move by the Town Council, and he hopes in the future the Council will choose to use the funds that are available or raise taxes if needed for purchases rather than take out a loan.

Roger Carlton informed the Council that it had been requested he draft a resolution of direction regarding the Town’s decision of Occupancy Tax collection. This resolution had been given to the Mayor. Mr. Carlton gave an overview of the road damage in Lakeside and requested that after discussing this issue for several months that the Council take some action to move forward as these roads continue to deteriorate. Mr. Carlton also spoke in response to Mr. Gross’ comment; the loan was taken out after much discussion and was for the purpose of a new truck, water meters and repaving of the roads. The financial strain the Town may have at this time is not because of the loan being taken out but rather the loan being paid off decreasing fund balances.

Roger Schilf suggested that we possibly have a workshop or meeting with Ellen Davis to seek legal advice to assure that such important issues are handled properly. Mr. Schilf offered his assistance for the repairs needed at the Guard House. He feels there is some rot within the outer boards but definitely not a "lost cause." Mr. Schilf also prepared minutes for the sewer committee meeting held January 13, 2016 and will turn them into Town Hall to be distributed and kept for the record.

Councilmember Connie Gross stated that she wanted to make it clear for the record that the loan from UCB was taken illegally. The reason the Town may be in financial strain is due to other things that the money was used for.

### **Old Business**

**#1 Water Meter Bid Process/Specs for Installation:** The bids have been sent out and are due back to McGill by January 22, 2016. McGill will then return each bid to Town Hall by the February Planning Meeting. Further discussion of purchase will resume at that point. Mayor Crabtree, Jim Hager and John Garland recently traveled to Bryson City and was able to see their electronic meters. They spoke with the Technician and received positive feedback in regards to the new meters.

**#2 Road Repairs for Santeetlah Lakeside:** Councilmember John Garland reviewed a plan that was discussed in November's Council Meeting to prepare a letter for Jose Rosado requesting the turnover of the roads. There are many issues in regards to taking over the roads. There are sewer and water lines (owned by the Town) that could be affected. The Council agreed that a workshop is needed to clarify any legal aspects of this request. Town Administrator Kim Matheson was instructed to contact Attorney, Ellen Davis and request her presence at the upcoming Council Meeting in order to move forward with some action as soon as possible. Councilmember Connie Gross made a motion that February 16, 2016 there be a Closed Session Meeting with the attorney regarding Lakeside roads and all aspects involved. After the Closed Session a workshop will be held to further discuss and move forward. Councilmember Bob Wehr amended the proposed motion by tabling all issues with Lakeside until the appropriate professionals have been heard from. Councilmember John Garland seconded. All others agreed. The motion carried.

### **New Business**

**#1 Recommendation for Collection of Occupancy Tax:** A motion was proposed to proceed however Councilmember Connie Gross spoke with County Finance Director, Becky Garland and she is unsure if the Council's decision to work in combination with the County to collect the tax will be accepted. Mrs. Gross feels that we should seek legal advice for this decision before making any presentations to the Graham County Board of Commissioners asking for the assistance in the collection of Occupancy Tax. Councilmember Bob Wehr suggested that we speak with the attorney about this issue to clarify all legal standards are being met. No further action will be taken on this matter until legal advice is sought.

**#2 Tree Removal/Santeetlah Point:** A bid was submitted by Clean Cut Tree Service for the removal of two trees that have damaged the road on Santeetlah Point and will continue to do so until removed. Vice Mayor Jim Hager spoke with resident Scott Mitchell of Santeetlah Point and asked that he contact Duke Energy to inform them of the danger trees in the way of power lines to see if it may be their responsibility to remove the trees rather than the Town's. There are several areas in need of repair

throughout the Town. A list has been devised and will be prioritized as to which is most important. This item will be added to that list if there is no response from Duke Energy.

**#3 Approval of Building Application for 741 Black Bear Trail:** The building application submitted by Mr. Hornsby (attached to these minutes) only includes the interior renovations being done at his residence. There is now an addition being done on the outside in which no application has been turned in. Town Administrator Kim Matheson will contact Mr. Hornsby and request that he comply with the rules and submit a new application in order for the Council to ensure that there is no encroachment to neighboring property. Councilmember John Garland made a motion that Mr. Hornsby resubmit the application showing the outdoor renovations. Vice Mayor Jim Hager seconded. All others approved, the motion carried.

**#4 Proposal to Graham County Building Inspector:** Kim Matheson spoke with County Manager, Mike Edwards and ask if it may be possible for the Town to work with the County so that the building inspector for Graham County could enforce stop work orders on this project and others if Town rules were not followed. Mr. Edwards explained that Building Inspector, David Hyatt could not enforce codes presented by Lake Santeetlah unless permitted by the Graham County Board of Commissioners. A representative from the Council will attend the meeting February 16, 2016 at 5:00pm to request this service from Mr. Hyatt.

#### **Discussion Items**

**#1 Audio Equipment for Town Hall:** After a visit to Robbinsville High School to see the equipment used by teachers and a quote from Best Buy it has been determined that a projector and screen will be sufficient for the needs of Town Hall meetings. Vice Mayor Jim Hager provided a brief explanation of the specific equipment needed in order to display the information effectively. A location for the screen was discussed. The next step is to further research the projector and screen size needed for display. Jim Hager and Bob Wehr will work together to get the equipment ordered. Councilmember Connie Gross made a motion to purchase the projector and screen after adequate research with a budget of \$1000. John Garland seconded. All others agreed. The motion carried.

**#2 Report of Past Due Water Collection:** The total past due collected at this point is \$10,554.91. Three names remain on the list of which there has been no contact or effort made in regards to payment. Mayor Crabtree provided an email address for Neil Gatewood so he may be contacted. No information of Terry Ferguson was available. David Dickert was present for the meeting and asked for a payment plan. We will continue to attempt contact with the remaining individuals and report in February. No additional meters will be locked at this time.

**#3 Plans for Guard House:** Resident Roger Schilf shared his recommendations for the Guard House during Public Comment. After discussion, it was determined that there would be enough volunteers (on a warm day) to work together to fix the areas in need of repair. There are some materials that could be used in the basement. A date will be discussed in the coming months.

**#4 Update Regarding Official Town Map:** This item will be included in the discussion with Attorney, Ellen Davis as there is a need for legal advice regarding this matter.

**#5 Easement given Through Town Hall Parking Lot:** This item will be included in the discussion with Attorney, Ellen Davis as well. There is a need for legal advice regarding this matter.

**Announcements**

Mayor Crabtree announced that the next Planning meeting would be February 11, 2016 and Council meeting February 16, 2016 both at 10:00am. A Codification Study workshop will follow the February Planning meeting at 2:00pm.

With no further business at this time Councilmember Bob Wehr made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Hager seconded, all others agreed. The motion carried. Mayor Crabtree adjourned the meeting at 11:40am.

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Robert P. Crabtree, Mayor

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Emily Hooper, Town Clerk